

awards, and decorations, including the Air Force Achievement Medal, the Meritorious Unit Award, the Air Force Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon, the NCO Professional Military Education Graduate Ribbon, the Small Arms Expert Marksman Ribbon, the Air Force Training Ribbon, and the Cyberspace Support Badge.

Ryan enlisted in the Air Force in January of 2010. He was deployed to Germany with the 435th Air Ground Operations Wing, First Communications Maintenance Squadron.

Ryan's brother Nathan said:

Being with [the Air Force] was the best career move he ever made. The Air Force gave him the chance to go overseas, learn new cultures and serve his country just like our father did. It made him feel he gave something back to his country, as well as protect America.

Ryan was raised in Laurel County, the son of Karen Long and Doug Austin, who also served in uniform. He graduated from South Laurel High School in 2006. Friends remember that he enjoyed golf, cooking, working for charities, and traveling.

Nathan remembers:

When Ryan was around, he was fun to be with. We included each other in our hobbies like tennis, basketball and video games. We had our friends and we always had great times . . . it's really a heavy burden on my heart to know that I have lost a brother.

While in high school, Ryan worked as a teacher's aide for Joey Marcum, a science teacher. Joey remembers:

Ryan was such an awesome young man. He was honest, hardworking and dependable. You could depend on him for literally anything. He was just a really good guy.

Ryan leaves behind his wife Jessica. The two of them were married on December 6, 2009. At the time of Ryan's death, Jessica was pregnant with their first child. She had a boy, named Brayden Kaine Austin. Ryan "was really looking forward to being a father," his brother Nathan said.

Christa Koeller is a friend of Ryan and Jessica's who lived across the street from them when Ryan and Christa's husband were both stationed at Offutt Air Force Base near Omaha. She remembers the couple's joy at learning they would have a baby:

When he found out and Jessica found out that they both would be parents, they were so overjoyed to start that new segment of their lives. Ryan was a family man, devoted to his job, and he was very dedicated as an airman. . . . A baby son lost his father, and will never know him.

Ryan's funeral service in Corbin, KY, was officiated by Pastor Daniel Carmack of Hawk Creek Church. Firefighters, policemen, county health care workers, friends, family, and even those who did not know Ryan but wished to pay their respects literally lined the town streets as the funeral procession passed by. Ryan received full military honors from the Honor

Guard of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Pastor Carmack said:

Ryan Austin was not only a soldier, but a leader that has left an indelible mark on this generation.

The Pastor continued:

Ryan will long be remembered as . . . a devoted husband, loving son, leader to his generation, and always a friend. Although he was only 25, he have proved the statement true that "life is not measured in quantity, but in quality," and he lived his life to the full with integrity and honor.

Pastor Carmack, who was Ryan's youth pastor and watched this young man grow up, remembers that "Ryan was a kid that always served others." I think it is clear that as an adult, a husband, a father, and an airman, Ryan's commitment to serving others only grew stronger.

We in the Senate are thinking today of Ryan Austin's loved ones, including his wife Jessica; his son Brayden; his father Doug; his brothers Nathan Austin and Dylan Wall; his sister Rachel Austin; and many other beloved family members and friends. Ryan was laid to rest next to his mother Karen Long.

I would like Ryan's family to know that the Senate honors Sergeant Ryan D. Austin's life of service. We are saddened by this very tragic loss, and we are grateful for his supreme sacrifice, which reminds us all of the meaning of valor.

#### GREENVILLE, KENTUCKY, FIRE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to speak briefly on a tragedy that happened this morning in Kentucky.

News reports are still developing, but we do know that a large house fire occurred in Greenville, in Muhlenberg County, in western Kentucky. Fire officials reports say multiple lives were lost in the fire, including children. There are two survivors who have been flown to Vanderbilt University Medical Center for treatment.

Personnel from three fire departments—Greenville Fire, Graham Volunteer Fire, and Beechmont Volunteer Fire—responded to the blaze. I thank these brave firefighters, as well as the emergency medical technicians, police officers, and other responders who heroically leapt in to save lives.

Elaine and I are hopeful for a speedy recovery for the two victims who are still alive, and we extend our prayers and condolences to the families of the souls lost in this destructive fire. I will pay close attention to this story as events further develop. The entire Commonwealth stands behind Muhlenberg County right now, and we will do whatever we can to help recover from this horrific loss.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

#### STAFF-PREPARED MATERIALS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am sure not many people care, but the reason I didn't go first today is that those of us who serve in office depend on other people to prepare materials for us so we can make a reasonably good presentation. Well, I came here today and looked at my stuff—it was yesterday's. So I figured I would be better off waiting until I got the right one—which reminds me of something I heard as a very young Lieutenant Governor. This story may be true; it didn't happen to me, but I have always remembered it. It has always made me aware of the great work my staff does.

A man is used to his staff preparing his remarks, flowery remarks, and always so very, very well. He has a long speech he has to deliver. He gets to page 5, and it says, "OK, you SOB, you are on your own" and the rest is blank. I remembered that today, and figured I had better wait until my office had the right speech.

#### IMPROVING THE PROVISION OF MEDICAL SERVICES AND BENEFITS TO VETERANS—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 297, S. 1950.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion. The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 297, S. 1950, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

#### SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks the time until 11:15 a.m. will be equally divided and controlled dealing with flood insurance. At 11:15 a.m. there will be up to four rollcall votes in relation to amendments to that bill.

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following those votes the recess which was originally scheduled until 2 p.m.—and that will still be the case, except I ask unanimous consent that on the passage of S. 1926, as amended, the votes start at 1:50 p.m., with all other provisions of the previous order remaining in effect.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Additionally, we expect to receive momentarily the conference report to accompany the farm bill today, and we will work on getting an agreement to move forward on this today.

#### RETIREMENT OF JOEL BREITNER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, here in the Senate we work closely with so many people, but no one do we work more closely with than the court reporters. They are right here in our face every time we talk, taking down a verbatim transcript of what we say, and they work extremely hard.

We went through a period of time when we were working through all